7: Gulick E-5 (1952) 1955 ME1 Lebanon ME1

621 571 remembered that genealogically and conceptually (the villagers' concept), Munṣif is a single kinship unit.[1]

[178] This structure of in-groups is traditional, and it appears to have maintained its vitality in the face of great culture change, to which a limited amount of local exogamy seems to be the only major concession. When, however, we turn to the other areas of behavior which are reviewed in this chapter, we find that none of them can be discussed at all without reference to the problems of acculturation.

MONEY

436 The villagers' need for, and great concern about, money is very clear indeed. This is entirely understandable since the expense of education and manufactured products, alone, require much of it.

Money as it is known in the Western world is very ancient in the Middle East, in fact it apparently originated there. However, before about seventy-five years ago its use in most villages was limited, since for most needs barter and mutual help in a regime of local self-sufficiency were ordinarily enough to motivate exchange of goods and services.

[457] Money began to come in large quantities into villages like Munṣif from emigrants in America. At the same time, Lebanon began to receive foreign manufactured articles which could only be obtained through payment of cash. Today, money is the only means of exchange in the village, and prices are an incessant topic [435 455] of conversation among the villagers. This is, of course, due in part to the fact that the country has suffered severe inflationary trends during the past ten years, in part, according to Murray, to "a natural speculative proclivity on the part of most of the people" (1947, p. 15).

However, there are some indications that this recent emphasis on money as a thing in itself has set up disturbing conflicts in many people. For example, it is [186] often heard that the Western powers are obviously bent upon buying the friendship of the Arabs, but that true friends cannot be bought. Such an attitude might either be a projection of attitudes and behavior prevalent among the speakers themselves, or it might be an expression of sincere and objective distaste for one of the unpleasant consequences of overemphasis on money. In any case, a conflict in values relating to money is consciously recognized.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE

181 871 555 "In Munṣif you will find many people who live in poor houses but have much education. This is because we would rather, if we must choose, use our money for a fine education than for a fine house." This was one of the first remarks that was made to the writer about the culture of the village, and, as time went on,

[1] For additional perspectives on the structure of the village see Gulick (1955, pp. 570–71).

that flow of correspondence, "Maktoob" (letter) and "Maktoob Musowker" (registered letter). A check was always contained in the registered letter, and it became the symbol of joy and festivities for the family group.

Once or twice a week, the mail came to the village. Many hours before the arrival of the mail, people would assemble in the barber shop of Uncle Deeb (for he became the uncle of everybody) who was responsible for the distribution of the mail. For hours, before and after mail distribution, people would loiter there, exchanging the news of their emigrants and having a social time. Usually, Uncle Deeb preferred to put the registered letters aside and then give them in person to the families concerned. That was his reward—to be a messenger of joy to the people. As he went around, he spread the news of the registered letters far and wide, until everybody began to talk about them.

3. *Cash money becomes a supreme value in village life:* Through the silk industry, foreign missions and contact with the city, cash money, as a highly desirable article of value, was introduced into the village organization. In order to obtain more of this new value, emigrants were lured abroad. Through hard or easy work, straight or crooked means, they got hold of the precious cash and sent it back to their people. Without any exception, every single one of those letters mentioned above, referred to cash money that had been sent, was

167 sent or would be sent to the folks at
436 home. Sending the money home had
457 a double significance to the emigrants.
178 It gave them the satisfaction of living up to the obligation to the kinship group and it built for them prestige in the home village. At the same time, prestige and the satisfaction of luxurious needs were the reward of those who received the checks. They could buy new things with the money, lend it for interest or acquire more land with it.

In a word, emigration was the last step with which the village plunged into the Western economic system and became highly "money conscious." Some fifteen years ago, one of the upstart leaders in Bishmizzeen was reminded of the fact that the business he was conducting in Tripoli and Beirut was not considered as honest by the village folks. His answer was "Once I have a substantial amount of cash in my pocket, the people will forget all about the means by which I got the cash."

167 4. *Emigrants fail to return to the*
621 *village:* At first, emigrants left the village, with a view to earning a certain amount of cash within a few years, and then returning to live in the village. The kinship and the communities ties were still strong, and the early emigrants considered the village as their true home. Some of those early emigrants, about 21, succeeded in carrying through the original intention—they came back and settled down permanently. The majority of those who returned, about 98, could not stay in the village more

P71 (B)

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1 LEBANON MD1

L 648 In regard to the 'Services Economiques' and S 648 certain other departments, the experiment was tried of administering them by joint Syro-Lebanese commissions; but for the most part the transferred services were administered separately by the two Governments. To the more ardent nationalists, this was an unsatisfactory element in a transfer which was otherwise to be welcomed. They complained also that the transfer was more in name than in reality, since for reasons of efficiency the French personnel of the services was retained temporarily.

S (ii) In February, 1944, an Anglo-French financial agreement 648 was signed. It named a 'franc area' composed 436 of all territories under the control of the French Committee of National Liberation, and fixed the rate L of exchange at 200 francs to the pound sterling. With 648 the agreement of the Syrian and Lebanese Govern- 436 ments, a special area fixed the rate of exchange of the Syro-Lebanese pound at 22.65 francs (it had previously been 20 francs), and thus prevented any change in the present rate of 8.83 Syro-Lebanese pounds to the pound sterling. The French Committee also agreed to revalue certain franc assets of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, to restore the gold formerly held by the Banque de Syrie et du Liban, and, should there be any further modification in the value of the franc, to guarantee the Syro-Lebanese pound against any resulting loss.

The agreement was widely criticized in Syria and Lebanon. It was regarded as contravening the allied declarations of June, 1941, which promised Syria and Lebanon full membership of the sterling bloc. Moreover, by weakening the link between the pound sterling and the currency of the two States, it created barriers between them and the other Arab States at a time when the movement for closer association between the Arab countries was gathering renewed strength. More important still, it was observed that the agreement was only temporary, and could be terminated by either party at three months' notice. When it should come to an end, there was a danger